



THOMAS J. VILSACK, GOVERNOR
SALLY J. PEDERSON, LT. GOVERNOR

STATE OF IOWA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
JUDY A. JEFFREY, DIRECTOR

Contact: Kathi Slaughter
Iowa Dept. of Education
515/281-5651
kathi.slaughter@iowa.gov
For Immediate Release

Three Districts Awarded Grants to Improve High School Reading

(DES MOINES, Iowa) – March 6, 2006 – A total of \$100,000 in grants has been awarded to three high schools in the state to fund programs designed to boost students' reading skills.

Abraham Lincoln High School in Council Bluffs, Dubuque Senior High in Dubuque, and Marshalltown High School in Marshalltown each will receive \$33,333 to implement the improvement programs for the 2006-07 school year. The National Governor's Association Best Practices Honor States Grant Program provided funding for the grants.

Each school's program will focus on increasing student achievement through the development of teachers' strategies in the area of literacy, specifically reading.

"By focusing on reading achievement, we know students will gain additional benefits in other subjects, such as science or history," said Jim Reese, bureau chief for Instructional Services at the Iowa Department of Education.

Reese said the grants will provide necessary professional development to help teachers learn instructional strategies designed for adolescents who have significant delays in reading, as well as integrate reading comprehension strategies into all coursework.

"Teachers still need to focus on developing proficiency in reading with high school students," Reese pointed out. "Research is continuously emerging to help guide reading instruction, and we must ensure it is available to our teachers and students."

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Grimes State Office Building - Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0146

PHONE (515) 281-5294 FAX (515) 242-5988

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